THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) There is no authentic survey to provide information/statistics relating to the abuse of petro-products, etc. by the youth and child labourers.

(c) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has established 110 Drug De-addiction Centres for the treatment of various categories of addicts. In addition to this, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing a scheme entitled 'Scheme for Prevention for Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse* wherein grant-in-aid is sanctioned to the non-governmental organisations for providing preventive awareness, counselling, treatment and rehabilitation services for all forms of drug abuse/addiction. These organisations implement programmes according to the needs of the various vulnerable target groups. Currently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is providing assistance to 388 organisations for 138 Counselling and Awareness Programmes and 335 Treatment and Rehabilitation Programmes.

Illegal sale of blood

† 3080. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that illegal trade of sale of blood by the people in the country is going on unabated;

(b) if so, the names of States where such trade is mainly going on;

(c) whether Government propose to check this trade; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

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† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) Professional Donation of blood has been banned in the country since 1st January, 1998. For generating enough blood through voluntary blood donation programme, the Government of India have taken a number of steps such as media campaign through, TV, AIR and newspapers, developing IEC material for one-to-one communication, observation of National Voluntary Blood Donation Day on 1st October every year, encouraging rational use of blood among clinicians and the launching of special campaign to educate masses to support voluntary blood donation. Strict vigilance is being maintained by Drug Controllers of all States to ensure that no paid donation takes place and non unlicensed Blood Banks operate.

Inclusion of AIDS in the Mediclaim Insurance

3081. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are seriously considering a proposal to include AIDS in the mediclaim insurance coverage policy, as AIDS is an epidemic, in the interest of the unfortunate souls infected by the deadly disease;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The General Insurers' (Public Sector) Association of India have reported that the four nationalised insurance companies have no plans to cover AIDS under the mediclaim policy. They have also reported that AIDS is a general exclusion under the health care policies internationally also. The main reasons for the exclusion are:—

1. Difficulty in estimating the cost of treatment.
2. Multifarious ways of manifestation.